
El Harén
de Lavandería
Peazy

EL HARÉN DE LAVANDERÍA

BY PEAZY

The good thing about being single is you don't have to cough to cover the splash when you take a dump.

Frédéric Beigbeder, *Windows on the World*

In the quarter of perdition where my youth went as if to complete its education, one might have said that the portents of an imminent collapse of the whole edifice of civilization had a rendezvous.

Guy Debord, ***Panegyric, Vol. 1***

Harem:

- *derogatory*
  a group of women perceived as centering around a particular man:
  "rich men with their extensive harems of buxom blondes"

Even in irreconcilable separation, Karina finds herself washing Daniel's dirty undies. Not by any kind of arrangement, of course, no—it was quite accidental. She examines the disgustingly overworn boxers and shakes her head. Despite their newfound cleanliness, they are unrepentantly filthy. His sad little unit had spent so much time chafing against their crotch, there was a hole where the taint should have been. And the bastard always wondered why she confessed to him she couldn't fuck an animal anymore. She peers through the unmentionables' crotch valley and into their badlands. The bleach could not eradicate its mudded landscape. She momentarily considers keeping them as a reminder of where she'd been and never wanted to be again, but I convince her there is no better place for them than the bin. ~~She does not thank me. There is no need. Convincing herself it's her idea, she smiles, pats herself on the back vis-a-vis a form of euphoria only self-satisfaction can bring, gathers her freshly clean clothes and exits.~~

Ana likes to show off her lingerie to the unmarried day laborers who bring in their muddy, sweaty toil clothes to wash themselves. The men show passive interest but otherwise do not care to approach or even verbalize any intentions. They are marginally cliquish, their camaraderie is loose and contingent on propinquity, only acknowledging each other long enough to show each other whatever it is they come across while scrolling on their phones. She is well aware her flirtations are mostly means by which to edify her own ego and is fine with that.

The ecosystem is undisturbed, and I am a bored god.

Two older women watch *José Luis* from a bench while they wait to move their wash to dryers. They chatter in Spanish about useless, womanizing men (that is to say,

undomesticated where it counts most (being able to fix everything except your nature (whatever that means anymore) is hardly the measure of a man this day and age (and these women are decidedly not of a radical bent; they demand very little—certainly not enough—despite contributing a fuck of a lot more than your average college going feminist who may or may not have read Kollontai or seen a single episode of *I Love Lucy*)), slathered in machismo like hot sauce over chicharrones or the sweat that accumulates over their brow when fantasizing about railing the various, interchangeable white women on TV. One woman says to the other, "these assholes are lucky their women just bring them on TV!" And the other laughs and says, "I've dried his dinner plates with his stinky underwear." "Did he know?" "No. I convinced him that particular dish was a family recipe from the state my grandmother was born, and that the smell and taste are... what you call it?" "Aphrodisiac?" "Right." "Did he want to

fuck after?" "He always wants to fuck. They never not want to fuck. They don't want to fuck, they're cheating or dying." They both laugh.

I like them.

Brenda is a single mother who separates her loads by color and fabric while also trying to keep an eye on her son who, with birthday money pinned to his shirt, has gathered around the *Street Fighter* game with three other kids. ~~She may or may not be more worried he'll spend it all on the only girl in their congregation than of the possibility of him getting robbed by a bully or some shit.~~

She texts his father at least five times to no response. It always happens this way. Every birthday. But she wonders why birthdays and holidays should be any different than the usual. The man is happily absent just to punish her. She supposes he thinks that without time

away from the boy, she can't accept whatever dick is proffered her like the slut he always maintains she is, but she doesn't even like dick. And it's his fault anyway. His member's a pitiful excuse for a vienna sausage, to say nothing of its possibility of being used as an instrument of pleasure. The thing even pisses quietly, inoffensively (!), almost apologizing for sullying the bowl with its dark yellow expressions. Occasionally she weeps for all the dumb young women he manages to trick into screwing him. But it never lasts long, for the homoromantic asexual she's become tends to fantasize not of being bent over something unstable and uncomfortable by an absolute oaf, but rather of something unmoveable and companionable with someone mature and pleasant in demeanor. See, the only one suffering in this equation is the boy, and that is what would upset her if she countenanced suffering as more than an abstracted grievance used as a launchpad for pithy personal philosophies only

meaningful if they can be commodified or utilized for political expediency.

Lidia's tits are squished together in a vision of exquisite cleavage (her F cups fucketh over) as her elbows rest on neatly folded towels. She's distracted by a text from the fuccboi she's trying to shake. So far he has not used Greco-centric alphabet language as a feature of his personality, but she's also pretty sure he's not self-aware enough to feign intellect. Thankfully his vanity is as minimal as his desire to impress. She's never even seen his hair. Maybe he was born with a beanie; a boring dude who talks about *Cum Town* way more than any normal person should. Every other text is a clip she generously gets about halfway through before deciding it's just not funny at all to her and responding with a thumbs up. And he doesn't bother asking her what she thinks because he doesn't care (her assumption). Worst part is: she can't take a shit in peace, and she can't engage in tedious

repetitive stress-inducing activities in public without having to indulge him—to say absolutely nothing of getting through work days without the distraction inherent in being text harassed by this amazingly leisurely fuccboi (surprisingly and perhaps refreshingly—no dick pics; though potential red flag (?)). Mystery is one thing, but outright obfuscation is something entirely different. Like, does he even work? Holy shit. Ding. Oh, there's gotta be a trust fund somewhere under that beanie. Ding. Ding. Okay. Ding. Ding ding ding ding ding ding ding ding. Fuck.

Justine is a big woman with a bigger heart. She makes $8.00/hr to run this underboard, underfunded and practically neglected (capitalistic) halfwit's "dream." The working class have to wash their clothes; it's a service! Sometimes the overlords pay her in IOUs. Sometimes they pay her nothing (check's in the mail kind of shit) and inquire (read: gaslight) as to whether or not she can do any better,

considering she's a morbidly obese (hooray for biting, hurtful embellishment!) high school dropout with no prospects—like, she can make money on *OnlyFans*, but wouldn't she feel absolutely sinful and dirty and dishonest (?) because that's not real work; whores doing that shit enjoy putting themselves out there, like a husband who gets off on being cucked by a bull his wife only barely vetted through *Craigslist* or *Facebook Marketplace* or whatever. Except he's not her husband. He's just a guy with kids by another woman. An ex-wife. A dead wife, he *says*; he's a widower. But he didn't kill her. Expectation did. ~~Ford F150s are definitely not the weapon of choice for the modern disaffected youth. You got a couple feet of visible whatever to hone.~~ (BIG WTF THERE—MUST'VE BEEN DRUNK) Which is to say despite the opportunity and time purchased, he never grew into anything except age and is already resigned to whatever applicable stereotypes are hurled his way whether he's aware of such judgements or not.

Justine licks her lips at the white boy who's wandered into her workplace drunk as fuck and ready to fuck. The ladies watching *José Luis* chuckle about how the gabacho should have much higher standards (and who the hell does their laundry absolutely annihilated on drink anyway?), but they don't know Justine outside of her job. She has nothing and gives everything, but as far as the crones are concerned she might as well be ~~Evita Perón or some shit, hoarding ever valuable quarters (the only currency worth a damn in a lavandería) in the name of "fairness" or some consumerist equivalent, but truly for to somehow enrich herself, singing a tune the time entire like the power hungry little (big) princess she is.~~ And sure, none of it makes the remotest sense unless your only knowledge of history is born from media meant to entertain or emotionally manipulate as opposed to educate, and that is the point. "Just doing my job," she says, and they scoff, but at starvation wages, that is political economy and not some analogue for

Nazism or fascism or whatever overloaded and overworked sentimental frame of reference rightoids and bourgeois radlibs can dream up out of their feelings of undue burden or inconvenience. Naturally, the white boy gives no indication he sees her, but it's possible if he does, there is a momentary descent into the debauched madness inherent in fantasizing about his knob being on the receiving end of the not-so-everyday (oh-so-ordinary and base, but with that little extra we all imagine ourselves to possess) wonders of the abilities of her apple polisher. (*editorial note* THIS SECTION SHOULD PROBABLY CONTAIN EVEN MORE STRIKETHROUGHS THAN THE PREVIOUS)

So anyway, Justine chugs a soda in between bites of hot fries (not the limp-dicked Andy Capps ones, the Cheetos ones that stick to your teeth like chicles to soles or stink to shit, whatever) and noticed the mayo wasn't even that good looking anyway. The hair he's hidden

underneath the beanie glistens and mats itself to his wrinkled forehead. There is dead, dry skin in his facial hair, and he is missing both his front teeth, but he has a belly (proportionately distended) so she doesn't think he's any kind of addict; worse, it's an indication he's inveterate in his embrace of bad habits.

But as any meddlesome god, I must intervene here. Justine's doleful countenance in the realization of yet another disappointment (no matter said noun's shallowness and brevity) is quickly countered by the entrance of the balefully jealous presence of the gringo's love apparent, the spurned, knife wielding paramour. And this jilted Jill does not give one fuck about reality. For her, optics are accurate reflections of what she assumes to be true. ~~Some call it paranoiac misunderstanding, she is calling it as she sees it (and can hardly be blamed, tbh)~~ and she doesn't fucking like it. "So you're the fat bitch fishing for my man?"

The gabacho, naturally, has lost himself (or assumes he has somehow blended into) the bustle of the lavandería.

"Fishing?"

"Don't play dumb. I'll cut you, hoe."

"Dumb? I don't know him!"

"For real? So why you eye banging him?"

"You've never checked a guy out out of curiosity?"

"I keep my eyes to myself and so should you. Bitches always talk about being objectified by men, but I see the glimmer on your chin. That's saliva clinging to stubble disgustingly cultivated through neglect, you drooling cow."

"It's Pepsi!"

"Yeah, cuz people voluntarily drink Pepsi."

"Millennials love a good marketing ploy. *Crystal Pepsi* is like that abusive ex who pops up when you least expect them—you didn't really want them but you always somehow intuited you deserved them…"

Anyway, this wasn't the real dialogue between the two women, it's just the one that sounds best and doesn't make me look like a complete asshole (though I am most assuredly the reigning champion in this category) and worse, the cracker's lover was quite possibly larger in that particular aspect; she openly questions Justine's claim of Millennial origin, calling her an old bag of at least 45 (shit, that's nearing the high end of their true age these days), taking absolutely zero care to not trigger any possible trauma connected to that number given its acquired baggage as a descriptive for the bourgeois failson pegged by a ten-inch strap-on as the representation of all that is evil in a milieu that oh-so-obviously never experienced any strife divisive at its core by way of shallow cultural signifying (until him, to say nothing of the parade of war criminals before him), a sound and fury absolutely bereft of any material implication or stakes yet thoroughly boiled in the conspiratorial dreamweaving of an

ideologically hardened bunch of cosplaying resistors.

Justine insults the cracker lover with an assertion that the only way she could've gotten him is by smearing peanut butter on her lady bits.

"You calling him a dog?"

"No, I'm calling you a gross bitch."

"You see this knife?"

"You won't do shit."

"Wanna bet?"

"If you were going to you already would have. I don't want your snaggletooth ass winner of a man. Believe me."

"Whatever. Admit you want him!"

"I don't. He's all yours."

Suddenly she relaxes her stance. She folds the knife blade into its handle and drops her arm to pocket it. Her face has deflated.

The cracker, who had become distracted by the kids playing *Street Fighter*, approaches.

"What's wrong babe?"

"I'll never get rid of you."

"What?"

"Fatty don't want ya, you moron."

"Huh?"

"Nothing."

"What happened?"

"She thinks I was eye banging you," Justine offers.

"Oh. Were you?"

"Maybe at first. But then I got a better look at you."

"You see my bulge?"

"It's a sock! You're ugly as shit inside and out, and I would like to die."

"It's not a sock. I'm endowed!"

"You are?" Justine asks, curious.

"He's not. 'Less you think 4 and half is endowed."

They both laugh.

The cops show up fashionably late, and Adam and Patrick, who've been outside in the alley drinking and chain smoking the whole time, arguing about who was hotter: Tia Carrere in *Wayne's World* or

Winona Ryder in *Beetlejuice* (?)—decide they should probably get their laundry. They don't bother dumping their open containers of bum wine as they already know from experience these bastards aren't the booze police. To the point, they police absolutely nothing but their own paranoia, frequently passing up slam dunk opportunities to harass and cite motherfuckers for the much more dangerous and exotic, not to menton subtly elaborate, mostly extemporized excuses to shoot people, all fully backed by the department—an intricate web of policy and denial and justification that shifts and transmogrifies depending on the class positioning (and relatedly, melanin content) of whoever is unlucky enough to cross their paths.

"For me, she was the original goth girl," Adam argued.

"I'll see you on that one and raise you Fairuza Balk," Patrick countered.

"But that movie was on the nose. Of course they were goth to our juvenilic understanding. *Beetlejuice* was

unpretentious and unserious which gave it breathing room to be funny.”

“Only after they abridged the script like crazy. It was supposed to be darker.”

“Winona Ryder is hotter.”

“Tia Carrere… the snake? Dude, you telling me you wouldn’t?”

“I would, but we’re talking about preference.”

“No shit.”

“Just admit you’re a racial fetishist.”

“Huh?”

“Come on.”

“Wait… cops have guns drawn.”

“Head down. Keep folding.”

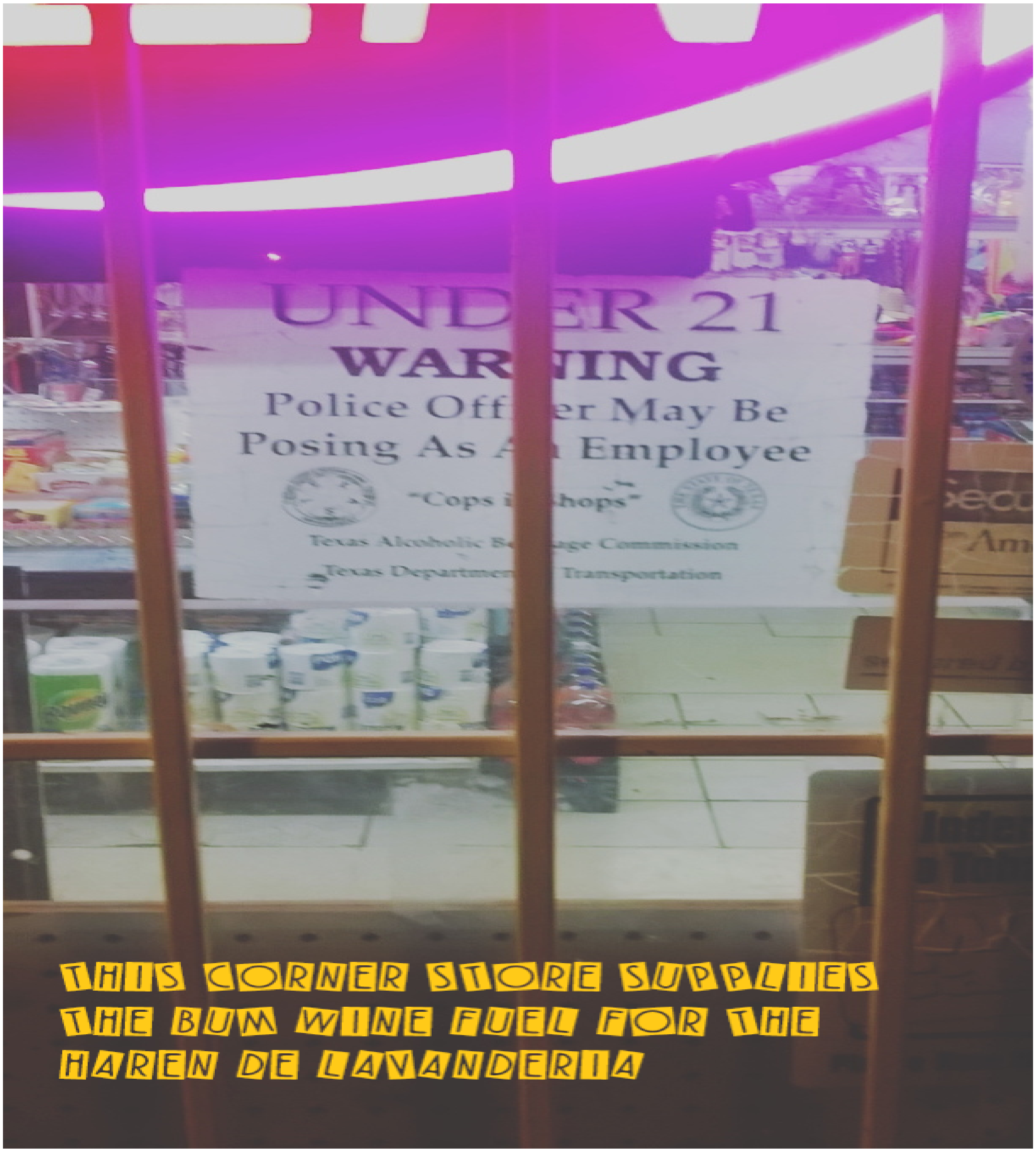
“~~I don’t even know what that means. I’ve had black women tell me I’d make pretty babies, Latin women tell me my lack of machismo is preferable to Latin men, and I’m the fetishist? For a hypothetical preference? You know neither one of us would get remotely close to either of those women. Stop taking a fun thing and making it a cultural politic.~~”

“Everything is politics.”

“Spoken like a mouthpiece for the bourgeoisie.”

“Nice to see I’ve gotten under your skin. Ryder,” Adam laughs.

“For the last time, lady, put the knife on the ground!”



HAREN DE LAVANDERIA PEAZY